

**Security Council**

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Note verbale dated 28 March 2018 from the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the Security Council and has the honour to transmit herewith a letter from the Chair of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands kindly requests that the present letter and its annex be issued as a document of the Security Council.

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**Annex to the note verbale dated 28 March 2018 from the
Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures. You will find attached a letter addressed to the members of the Security Council sharing information about the work of special procedures mandate holders that is deemed pertinent to the work of the Council (see enclosure). I would like to request the assistance of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, as a member of the Council, in transmitting the letter to the President of the Council for distribution.

(Signed) Catalina **Devandas Aguilar**
Chair of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures

Enclosure

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures to share information about the work of special procedures mandate holders that is deemed pertinent to the work of the Security Council.

The special procedures system is composed of independent experts appointed by the Human Rights Council with mandates to report and advise on human rights from a thematic or country-specific perspective. The system is a central element of the United Nations human rights machinery and covers all human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political and social. As at 1 January 2018, there are 44 thematic and 12 country mandates, some of which are of particular relevance for the Security Council, as they cover countries that feature in the work of the Council (the Central African Republic, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mali, Myanmar, Somalia, the Sudan and the Occupied Palestinian Territories).

Special procedures have consistently played an important role in early warning, sounding the alarm on emerging crises. Back in 1994 in Rwanda, the then Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions forewarned of a potential genocide, and, more recently, mandate holders warned about emerging concerns in relation to Burundi, the Central African Republic and Myanmar, for example. Over the years, the system has taken early action in relation to several country situations, including through communications, reports to States, statements or press releases. Mandate holders have access to people and territories that frequently are not accessible to others. Their visits to countries in post-conflict, conflict or crisis situations constitute a great opportunity for the United Nations system as whole.

More information about the activities undertaken by special procedures in the past year is reflected in the annual report on special procedures and its addendum on facts and figures. The report shows the interrelated nature of the work of special procedures and how, by reaching out to multiple stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels, they contribute to strengthening United Nations engagement. Most importantly, the report showcases the role of special procedures in the area of prevention and peace and security, including in the context of the ongoing reforms of the Secretary-General.

In this connection, I would like to draw your attention to recent thematic reports produced by special procedures, in particular on prevention, early warning, conflict and post-conflict situations and humanitarian crises, including in relation to the impact of fundamentalism and extremism on cultural rights (A/HRC/34/56), the right to food in conflict situations (A/72/188), private military and security companies (A/HRC/36/47), the vulnerabilities of children to sale, trafficking and other forms of exploitation in situations of conflict and humanitarian crisis (A/72/164) and transitional justice in weakly institutionalized post-conflict settings (A/HRC/36/50). In addition, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence developed a comprehensive framework approach to prevention (A/72/523).

Likewise, a number of visits by special procedures to countries on the agenda of the Security Council might be of interest. These include Chad (Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice), Iraq (Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions), Afghanistan (Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons), Cyprus, Serbia and Kosovo¹ (Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights) and Israel as well as the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Government of the State of Palestine (Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences). Of particular interest could also be the joint visit to Nigeria in 2016 by the Special Rapporteurs on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, who elaborated a comprehensive set of recommendations to the Government and other actors to strengthen their efforts to ensure the full protection and promotion of the rights of women and children affected by the Boko Haram insurgency. In addition, Libya received a visit of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons in January 2018. My visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities in 2017 also offered a rare opportunity for detailed United Nations engagement and dialogue. These dialogues with Member States were made possible by the human rights legal framework, which also provides for early warning and the identification of the root causes of and responses to conflict and crisis.

The special procedures system is interested in improving its engagement with United Nations bodies, such as the Security Council, with a view to enhancing the promotion and protection of human rights as a key element in the maintenance of international peace and security. As you are aware, several of my colleagues have recently had interactions with the Council in either an informal or a formal manner. For example, in March 2017, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery gave a presentation at the ministerial open debate of the Council on trafficking in persons in conflict situations, forced labour, slavery and other similar practices. The Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, made concrete recommendations on addressing trafficking in persons in conflict situations in the context of maintaining international peace and security during the open debate convened by the Italian Presidency on 21 November 2017. I hope that these interactions can be maintained and strengthened.

I trust that the present letter will help to illustrate how the work of special procedures could be of interest to the Security Council. We would be pleased to engage further with the members of the Council, including to discuss how we can assist in the discharge of your prevention mandate, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

(Signed) Catalina **Devandas Aguilar**

Chair of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures

¹ All references to Kosovo in the present letter, whether to the territory, institutions or population, are to be construed in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.